

Witness Interrogation Affidavit

At Khabarovsk

March 28, 1946

I, Col. of Justice Ivanof, Assistant Prosecutor for the USSR at the International Military Tribunal, Tokyo, interrogated through the interpreter officer, Lt. Petrof, the following person as a witness, having previously warned him of the responsibility he should take upon himself in case of false statements, according to Article 95 of the Criminal Law of the U.S.S.R.

1. Name: Kazuma OTSUBO
2. Age: 51
3. Official Position: Chief of Staff of the Third front of the Kwantung Army
4. Political Affiliations: None
5. Present Location: Khabarovsk

A certificate concerning the responsibility of the witness for false statement and also the interpreter-officer's for false interpretation are attached to this affidavit.

Kazuma OTSUBO

- Q. From when have you been in the service of the Japanese Army? What kind of military education have you received? In what position have you served?
- A. I entered the active service in 1918. I graduated from the Military Academy in the same year, and from the Army Staff College in 1930. Then I became a Company Commander of the Third Mountain Artillery Regiment. From 1931 to 1936, I served in the Military Affairs Section of the War Ministry and from 1936 to 1937, in the Field Artillery School as an instructor in tactics. In 1937, I was transferred to the Artillery Section of the Department of Military Education. From 1937 to 1939, I served as a staff-officer of the Middle China Expeditionary Army, and from 1939 to 1940, I served again in the Artillery Section of the Department of Military Education. From 1941 to 1942, I became commander of an artillery regiment in North China. From 1941 to 1943, I served in the Artillery Section of the Department of Military Education. From 1943 to 1945, I was Chief of the Heavy Artillery School. In 1945, I became Chief of Staff of the Third front, the post of which I held as my last duty in the Army.

Q. From when and to what time have you been in service in Manchuria?

A. From March to August, 1945, until I was interned by the Soviet Army.

Q. Have you never been in service in Manchuria before that?

A. I was the Chief of Staff of the 23rd Division under the command of the Sixth Army, Hailar, for eleven months in 1942-43. The then Commanders of the Sixth Army were Lt.-Gens. KITA and ISHIGURO.

Q. When and where was the Second front Headquarters established?

A. In 1942, at Chichihaerh.

Q. Of what armies did the Second front consist?

A. It consisted of the 4th and the Sixth armies.

Q. In what directions were these Armies?

A. The 4th Army stationed in the direction of Blagoveshchensk and 6th Army stationed in the direction of Bozzia-Danria.

Q. When were the First front Headquarters established in Manchuria?

A. The First front Headquarters were established at the same time with those of the Second front, in May or June, 1942.

Q. For what reason were these two fronts composed in Manchuria in 1942? The Japanese were preparing war against Soviet, weren't they?

A. I heard that, as the military strength of the Kwantung Army had been increased owing to the realization of the "Kan-Toku-En" plan, fronts were newly organized in order to make the commandship easy, and the Kwantung Army Headquarters took the command of these fronts.

Q. How much was the military strength of the Kwantung Army in 1942?

A. The Kwantung Army had the military forces of about fifteen divisions.

Q. Were there any other army formations, for example, brigades or general reservists corps, etc.?

A. There were, besides eight Frontier-Guards detachments the front in which I served had three Frontier-Guards detachments, but there were eight in all in the Kwantung Army. There were no brigades at the time of "Kan-Toku-En", but just before the war was opened, the Frontier-Guards were reorganized into brigades and thus ten brigades were formed.

Q. When and from whom did you hear about the "Kan-Toku-En" plan?

A. In July, 1941, when I was in service of the Artillery Section of the Department of Military Education. I saw the name of the plan on the documents which were sent to there from the War Ministry.

Q. What measures was the Department of Military Education compelled to take by the plan of the "Kan-Toku-En"?

A. The special purpose of the "Kan-Toku-En" plan was the speedy training of troops for the emergency of war. It was difficult to practice the training in the Japanese homeland.

Q. Were these the troops prepared for the war against Soviet according to the plan of the "Kan-Toku-En" in 1941-42?

A. These were the troops to be used, for example, in the wars against Soviet, the United States, or Britain, according to the changes in international situation.

Q. Against what country was Manchuria a basis for war?

A. Manchuria was the basis for war against Soviet and China. It was important for war against U.S. too.

Q. Was it prearranged, in the "Kan-Toku-En" plan, to complete the construction of railways as well as of warehouses necessary for the supply of munitions and foods to the Kwantung Army?

A. Though I don't know much about the "Kan-Toku-En" plan, I think such matters were prearranged. As the measures prearranged in the plan were kept in secrecy, I don't know them exactly.

Q. Was the designation, "Kan-Toku-En", a cipher for the measure for the increase and strengthening of the Kwantung Army?

A. The meaning of this designation is the special manoeuvre of the Kwantung Army. The men who were sent to Manchuria from home in 1941, according to this plan, were told that they were going to have a special manoeuvre.

Q. Then, were the concentration and the strategic deployment of military forces in Manchuria kept in secrecy even to the Japanese enlisted men transported to Manchuria?

A. The increase of the Kwantung Army was secret to the enlisted men.

Q. How much was the Kwantung Army increased by the "Kan-Toku-En" plan?

- A. In 1941, the military formations of the Kwantung Army were put into the wartime organization, the deployment of the troops was a strategic one. The increased strength was some 300,000 men and the total numbered about 600,000.
- Q. Was each division of the Kwantung Army mainly arranged to the quarters in strategic directions most important in the war against Soviet?
- A. Yes, all divisions were stationed at the places mainly strategic important in the war against Soviet.
- Q. Can you come to the conclusion that the commander-in-chief of the Japanese Army made the strategic deployment of the Kwantung Army in 1941, for the war against Soviet?
- A. Yes; according to my private opinion, this strategic deployment was made for the war against Soviet.
- Q. Were the Headquarters of the First and the Second fronts established in conjunction with these circumstances?
- A. Yes; I think the Headquarters of the First and the Second fronts of the Kwantung Army in Manchuria were organized in connection with the strategic deployment of the troops.
- Q. Where was the "Kan-Toku-En" plan made?
- A. In the Japanese Army General Staff.
- Q. Who was the Chief of the Japanese Army General Staff at the time of the making of the "Kan-Toku-En" plan?
- A. The Chief of the Army General Staff was Gen. SUGIYAMA. The Chief of the Army General Staffs Military Operations Department was Major-Gen. TANAKA Shinichi. The War Minister of the Kono Cabinet, the then Cabinet, was General TOJO.
- Q. Was there, at that time, any agreement that Japan should enter the War on the side of Germany and Italy?
- A. I have heard of the military alliance among Japan, Germany and Italy, but I don't know the substance.
- Q. Was the Anti-Comintern Pact which was concluded among Japan, Germany and Italy in 1936 an anti-Soviet pact?
- A. I think it was anti-Soviet.
- Q. When were the Third front Headquarters established?

- A. The Third front Headquarters were organized in September, 1943, at ChiChihar, in place of the Second front which had gone to the South.
- Q. Did the Armies and Divisions of the Second front remain in Manchuria?
- A. All the Armies and Divisions of the former Second front remained in Manchuria in 1943, and came under the command of the Third front staff.
- Q. From where did the orders about the organization of the First, Second and Third fronts come? From the Army General Staff Office or the War Ministry?
- A. According to my opinion, it came from the Army General Staff.
- Q. Who made the replenishment? Was it the Army General Staff or the War Ministry?
- A. The replenishment plan was made by the Army General Staff. The War Ministry guided its practice.
- Q. Was it the War Ministry that put the "Kan-Toku-En" plan made by the Army General Staff into operation?
- A. I think so.
- Q. What do you know about the surprise attack plans made by the Japanese Army against Soviet in 1942 and 1943?
- A. At the first stage of the war against Soviet, the First front was to attack and occupy the Soviet Maritime Province. The Fourth Army of the Second front, by engaging in the diversional movement in the Blagoveshchensk District, was to cut off the Trans-Siberia Main Line, give a blow to this supply line, and facilitate the action of the First front which was in charge of the most important duty. The duty of the Sixth Army was to hold the Red Army from invading into Manchuria from Zabaikalye and engage in the defensive action.
- Q. Were these plans of the Kwantung Army offensive plans?
- A. Yes, in the eastern district, the plans of operations against Soviet were offensive.
- Q. Were these plans effective till the spring of 1944?
- A. Yes, these plans were effective till the spring of 1944.
- Q. What was the plan of hostile operations against Soviet made by the Sixth Army and the Second front in 1942 and 1943?



- A. In August, 1943, a conference concerning the military operations against the U.S.S.R. was held at the Headquarters of the 6th Army, Hailar. At that time, I attended the conference as the Chief of Staff of the 23rd Division. The chairman of the conference was Maj.-General IGETA, the then Chief of Staff of the 6th Army.
- Q. Were you the only person attended the conference as the divisional Chief of Staff?
- A. Yes, I was the only person.
- Q. For what reason?
- A. At that time, there was only one division in the 6th Army. Besides that, there were frontier-guards detachments.
- Q. Speak more minutely about the conference.
- A. As the Kwantung Army was to take the offensive in the areas of the Maritime Province during the first step of the war against the U.S.S.R. the 6th Army was to go on the defensive in its area. Therefore, through the first two days of the conference, the plan of defence in the area of the 6th Army was discussed. It was the scheme of the commander that we were to fight to death against the enemy in the Zabaikalye Area until new divisions would arrive to the Second front. On the third day of the conference, the offensive operation was studied. The operation was to be executed by the Front and the Army, reinforced by new formations. In this occasion, the 2nd front was to attack in the direction of Chita. The commander's plan was, after concentrating the main body in the area of Hailar, to make an attack from the southern district of Lake Dalainoor by an encirclement movement, behind the right wing of the Zabaikalye front and advance to Borzia Area, destroying the enemy forces and cutting off their retreat.
- Q. Were there sufficient military forces in the Area Army for attaining the purpose of operations in 1942-43?
- A. At least twenty divisions were required in order to achieve the objective of attack in the area of Chita. However, our strength in this area was sufficient just to make a strong resistance. Therefore in order to attack, reinforcement of between fifteen and twenty divisions from other areas was necessary. The regrouping of the Kwantung Army could be done only after the occupation of the Soviet Maritime Province and the accomplishment of the initial stage of war.

I wish that the map drawn by me showing the defensive operations of the 6th Army, belonging to the second front, at the first stage of the war against Soviet in 1943 and also the map showing the offensive operations of the Second front at the second stage of the war against Soviet, after the occupation of the Maritime Province was attained successfully, and the military forces of between ten and twenty divisions were transferred to the direction of Chita, were attached to this brief interrogation affidavit.

Q. When did Lieut.-Gen. KITA command the 6th Army?

A. I do not remember exactly, but I think he commanded the Army from 1941 to 1942. It was Lieut.-Gen. ISHIGURO who succeeded Lieut.-Gen. KITA.

Q. What was the plan of operations of the 3rd front when you were the Chief of Staff of that front in 1945?

A. In 1945, the duty of the 3rd front was to interrupt the advance of the Soviet Army in the vicinity of Chaonan, Wuchakow, and Tungliao in Manchuria. According to the plan of operations in 1945, the main forces of the third front should take up positions in the districts of Mukden, Ssuningchieh, and Hsinking, and if the enemies would come to attack, should destroy them in these districts.

The fundamental principles of the plan of operations for the war against Soviet in 1945 were as follows:

1. In case the main forces of the Soviet Army would attack the 44th Army in the vicinity of Mukden, the Japanese Army was to give a blow to the enemy's left wing with the largest possible military strength. For this purpose, the 30th Army from the Hsinking district and the 39th Division and the 9th Tank Brigade from the Ssuningchieh district were to attack the Red Armies with the purpose of annihilating them in short time.

2. In case the enemy would attack the 30th Army in Hsinking with its main forces, the blow to the enemy's wing was to be dealt by the 44th Army, the 39th Division and the 9th Tank Brigade.

3. In case the main forces of the Soviet Army would attack Ssuningchieh, the Japanese Army was to give an enveloping attack to both wings of the enemy. In this case, by the attack of the 30th Army from Hsinking and that of the 44th Army from Mukden, we should promptly annihilate the Soviet troops in the battlefield in short time.

4. If we could drive back the Red Army units in the district of the Dairen-Hsinking Railway Line, the Japanese Army was to attempt with one part of its military forces, to pursue the enemy promptly along the Harbin-Hailar Railway, to attack along the Chaonan-Khalonarsan Railway with its main forces, then to advance through Choi Colsan to the vicinity of Olovyamaya and Karymskaya in the Soviet territory, and to destroy the enemy by interrupting the enemy's retreat.

5. If we should be driven back by the confronting enemy, the Third front was to retreat, with its main forces to the vicinity of the line of Liuho, Hsinking and Huanhshen, to prevent the enemy's advance and form a plan for holding out with the utmost effort.

- Q. When did Lieut.-Gen. KITA command the 6th Army?
- A. I do not remember exactly, but I think he commanded the Army from 1941 to 1942. It was Lieut.-Gen. ISHIGURO who succeeded Lieut.-Gen. KITA.
- Q. What was the plan of operations of the 3rd front when you were the Chief of Staff of that front in 1945?
- A. In 1945, the duty of the 3rd front was to interrupt the advance of the Soviet Army in the vicinity of Chaonan, Wuchakow, and Tungliao in Manchuria. According to the plan of operations in 1945, the main forces of the third front should take up positions in the districts of Mukden, Ssuningchieh, and Hsinking, and if the enemies would come to attack, should destroy them in these districts.

The fundamental principles of the plan of operations for the war against Soviet in 1945 were as follows:

1. In case the main forces of the Soviet Army would attack the 44th Army in the vicinity of Mukden, the Japanese Army was to give a blow to the enemy's left wing with the largest possible military strength. For this purpose, the 30th Army from the Hsinking district and the 39th Division and the 9th Tank Brigade from the Ssuningchieh district were to attack the Red Armies with the purpose of annihilating them in short time.
2. In case the enemy would attack the 30th Army in Hsinking with its main forces, the blow to the enemy's wing was to be dealt by the 44th Army, the 39th Division and the 9th Tank Brigade.
3. In case the main forces of the Soviet Army would attack Ssuningchieh, the Japanese Army was to give an enveloping attack to both wings of the enemy. In this case, by the attack of the 30th Army from Hsinking and that of the 44th Army from Mukden, we should promptly annihilate the Soviet troops in the battlefield in short time.
4. If we could drive back the Red Army units in the district of the Dairen-Hsinking Railway Line, the Japanese Army was to attempt with one part of its military forces, to pursue the enemy promptly along the Harbin-Hailar Railway, to attack along the Chaonan-Khalonarshan Railway with its main forces, then to advance through Choi Colsan to the vicinity of Olovyemaya and Karymskaya in the Soviet territory, and to destroy the enemy by interrupting the enemy's retreat.
5. If we should be driven back by the confronting enemy, the Third front was to retreat, with its main forces to the vicinity of the line of Liuho, Hsinking and Huanchehen, to prevent the enemy's advance and form a plan for holding out with the utmost effort.



Q. Who was the Inspector-General of Military Education of the Japanese Army in 1941?

A. General YAMADA.

Q. Under whose command was Gen. YAMADA as the Inspector-general of Military Education?

A. He was under direct control of H.I.M. the Emperor.

Q. Did he have the same power as the War Minister and the Chief of the General Staff?

A. Yes, he had the same power and occupied the same leading position in the army as they did.

Q. What was the duty of the Inspector-general of Military Education?

A. The principle duty of the Inspector-general of Military Education was the guidance and supervision of the Japanese military education. The Inspector-general issued orders concerning the military education, and the Army Infantry School, the Army Artillery School and the Military Academy, etc., were under his control. The Army Paymaster's School and the Military Medical College were under the command of the War Minister, while the Army Staff College was under th at of the Chief of the General Staff.

Q. What measures did Gen. YAMADA take as the Inspector-general of Military Education according to the "Kan-Toku-En" plan?

A. Gen. YAMADA assumed leadership only in the military education of ordinary times. The education and guidance of the Kwantung Army according to the "Kan-Toku-En" plan, which was the plan of the front line, was made directly by the Chief of the General Staff. Accordingly, Gen. YAMADA supplied the Army General Staff only with the materials regarding education.

Q. What propositions did Gen. YAMADA make concerning the education of the Kwantung Army units?

A. Gen. YAMADA furnished only the materials necessary for the short course education to the Chief of the General Staff. The Inspector-general of Military Education assumed leadership in the military education of the units of peace organization footing. The units in Manchuria were educated as the units on a war footing, and accordingly, the guidance of education of the Kwantung Army in 1941 was made by the Army General Staff.

Q. Concretely speaking, what materials did Gen. YAMADA offer?

- A. They were the general materials for education.
- Q. How were the recruited men which, as you said before, were increased by about 300,000 in the Kwantung Army in 1941 organized?
- A. In 1941, the levy concerning the "Kan-Toku-En" plan was made in the homeland of Japan, and the recruited men were transported from Japan to Manchuria.
- Q. This levy was made during June and July, 1941. Was it a secret mobilization?
- A. At that time, it was a secret mobilization under the name of an educational levy.
- Q. Were the men mobilized and ordered to serve in the Kwantung Army those who had undergone military education or had they been in military service?
- A. Most of them were those who had undergone military education and had been in military service.
- Q. What order did General YAMADA issue concerning the training of the special attack corps (the death band)?
- A. Gen. YAMADA did not issue any order concerning the special attack corps (the death band). I think nobody gave any special order concerning them. Sometimes wartime death bands were organized, but these units did not receive any special training.
- Q. In what way were the Japanese soldiers trained for the purpose of war of aggression? What order did Gen. YAMADA give when he was the Inspector-general of Military Education?
- A. The fundamental object of education lies in training soldiers so that they can engage in any war without thinking of the characteristic of that war. The materials for spiritual education were prepared by a special section in the Department of Military Education. This section distributed to the troops the pamphlets in which behaviours of model soldiers were written.
- Q. Was it Gen. YAMADA who instructed the fundamental principles of education of officers, non-commissioned officers and enlisted men?
- A. Yes, Gen. YAMADA instructed the fundamental principles of military education as the Inspector General of Military Education. He often instructed about the spiritual education, too. But as regards the education of the units on a war footing, Gen. YAMADA, as the Chief of Military Education, sent to the Army General Staff only the materials.

- Q. What were the fundamental principles of spiritual education of soldiers concerning the war against China, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.?
- A. Political education was not conducted, but spiritual education was given, in which soldiers were taught that they should obey orders of superior officers and that they should become model soldiers.
- Q. What propaganda was made regarding the right of Japan to take over China?
- A. Towards China, it was propagated that this war had been waged for the purpose of constructing a new order in the Greater East Asia.
- Q. Who had suggested such an education?
- A. The fundamental principles of such education were instructed by the War Minister.
- Q. Who, among the War Ministers, had issued orders of such spiritual education that Japan should be the ruler of the Greater East Asia?
- A. War Minister TOJO spoke about these affairs at the assembly of Chiefs of Staffs in about 1941 and 1942.
- Q. Who, among Japanese statesmen and soldiers, had propagated the war against Soviet?
- A. I think General TANAKA, who had become the Vice-chief of the General Staff. The War Minister and the Premier, etc., had such thought. Lieut.-General MURAOKA, who was the Commander-in-Chief of the Kwantun Army just before the Manchurian Incident had such thought that Japan must solve her population problem by seizing the natural resources in Manchuria.

By my signature, I hereby certify that the above answers are of my own writing.

Kazuma OTSUBO

Interrogator: Col. of Justice, Assistant Prosecutor for the USSR at the International Military Tribunal, Tokyo.

Ivanof.

Interpreter-Officer:

Lt. Petrof.

The Witness:

Maj.Gen. Kazuma OTSUBO

Col. of Justice, Assistant Prosecutor for the U.S.S.R. at the International Military Tribunal, Tokyo, Ivanof.

Interpreter-officer:

Lt. Petrof.

Secretary-stenographer

- Q. What were the fundamental principles of spiritual education of soldiers concerning the war against China, the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.?
- A. Political education was not conducted, but spiritual education was given, in which soldiers were taught that they should obey orders of superior officers and that they should become model soldiers.
- Q. What propaganda was made regarding the right of Japan to take over China?
- A. Towards China, it was propagated that this war had been waged for the purpose of constructing a new order in the Greater East Asia.
- Q. Who had suggested such an education?
- A. The fundamental principles of such education were instructed by the War Minister.
- Q. Who, among the War Ministers, had issued orders of such spiritual education that Japan should be the ruler of the Greater East Asia?
- A. War Minister TOJO spoke about these affairs at the assembly of Chiefs of Staffs in about 1941 and 1942.
- Q. Who, among Japanese statesmen and soldiers, had propagated the war against Soviet?
- A. I think General TANAKA, who had become the Vice-chief of the General Staff. The War Minister and the Premier, etc., had such thought. Lieut.-General MURAOKA, who was the Commander-in-Chief of the Kwantun Army just before the Manchurian Incident had such thought that Japan must solve her population problem by seizing the natural resources in Manchuria.

By my signature, I hereby certify that the above answers are of my own writing.

Kazuma OTSUBO

Interrogator: Col. of Justice, Assistant Prosecutor for the USSR at the International Military Tribunal, Tokyo.

Ivanof.

Interpreter-Officer:

Lt. Petrof.

The Witness:

Maj.Gen. Kazuma OTSUBO

Col. of Justice, Assistant Prosecutor for the U.S.S.R. at the International Military Tribunal, Tokyo, Ivanof.

Interpreter-officer:

Lt. Petrof.

Secretary-stenographer

In this document, rewritings, insertions, and erasures are made as follows:

1. page 3. The word "army" is inserted in two places.
2. page 6. Four letters of a Japanese word for English "mainly" are inserted.
3. page 7. Two letters of a Japanese word for English "yes" are inserted.
4. page 18. Two letters of a Japanese word for English "spirit" are inserted.
5. page 20. One letter of a Japanese word for English "house" is rewritten.

The Witness:	Maj. Gen. Kazuma OTSUBO
Assistant Prosecutor:	Ivanof
Interpreter-officer:	Petrof.



In this document, rewritings, insertions, and erasures are made as follows:

1. page 3. The word "army" is inserted in two places.
2. page 6. Four letters of a Japanese word for English "mainly" are inserted.
3. page 7. Two letters of a Japanese word for English "yes" are inserted.
4. page 18. Two letters of a Japanese word for English "spirit" are inserted.
5. page 20. One letter of a Japanese word for English "house" is rewritten.

The Witness:

Maj. Gen. Kazuma OTSUBO

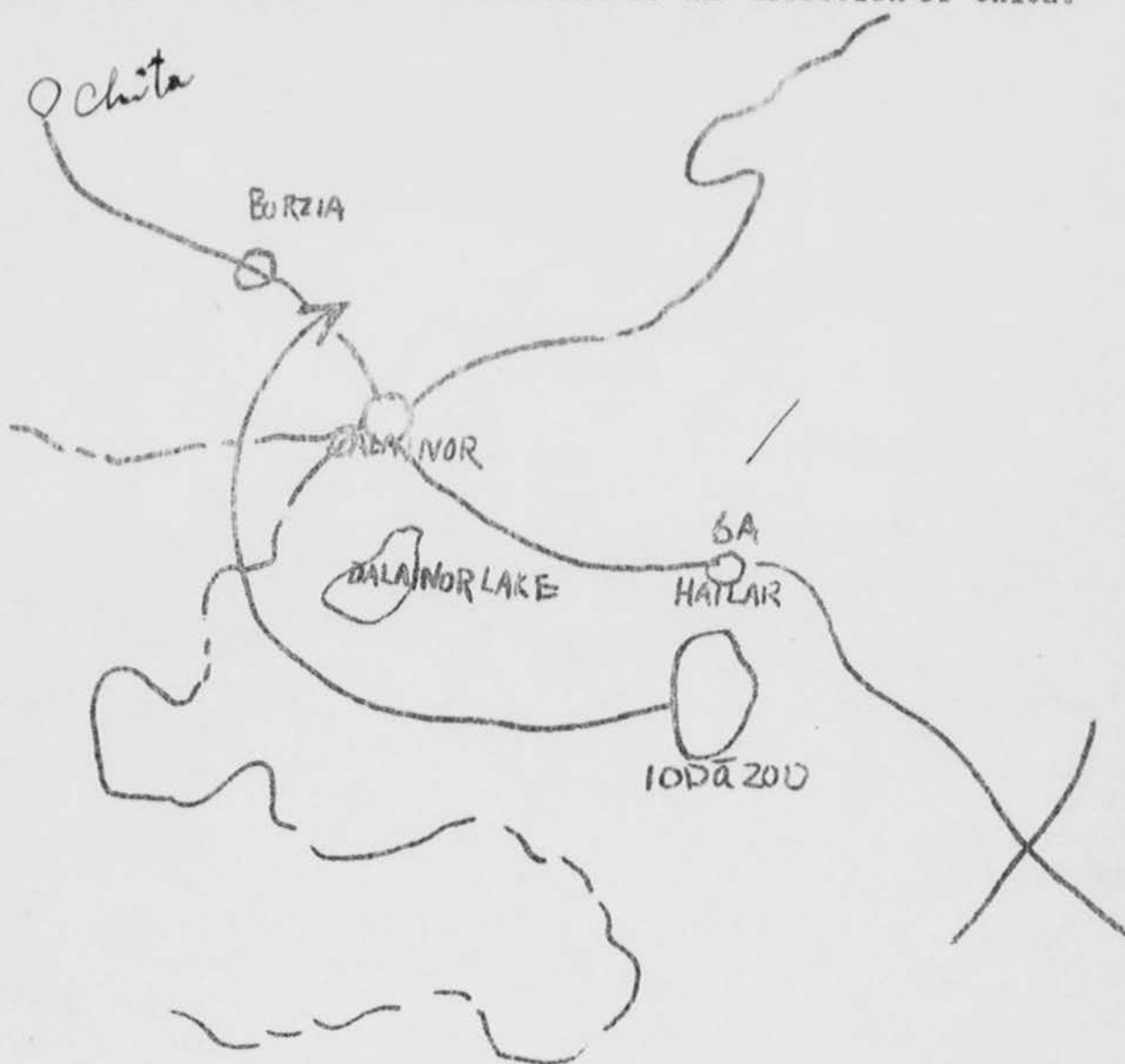
Assistant Prosecutor:

Ivanof

Interpreter-officer:

Petrof.

Map showing the offensive operations of the Second front at the second stage of the war against Soviet, after the occupation of the Maritime Province was attained successfully, and the military forces of between ten and twenty divisions were transferred to the direction of Chita.

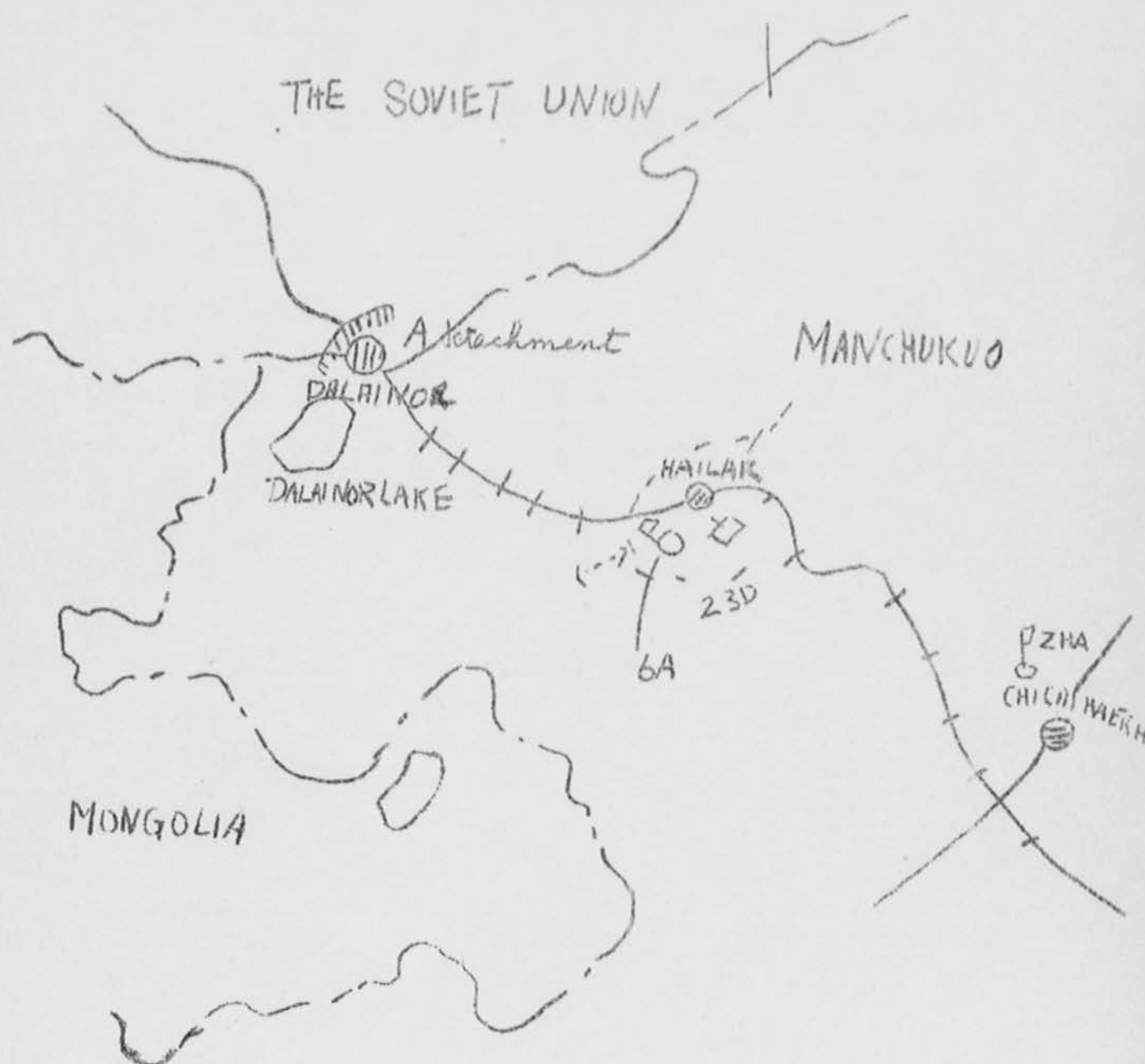


Maj. Gen. Kazuma Otsubo, Chief of Staff of the Third Area Army  
(March 28, 1946)

DOC. 1981

P. 13

Map showing the defensive operations of the 6th Army, belonging to the Second front, at the first stage of the war against Soviet in 1943.



Acknowledgment

Date & Place

I, the undersigned, Maj. Gen. Kazuma OTSUBO, Chief of Staff of the Third front, delivered this acknowledgement to Col. of Justice Ivanof, Assistant Prosecutor for the USSR at the International Military Tribunal, Tokyo, after having sworn that I, as a witness, would make only true statement concerning major war criminals.

I was previously warned of the responsibility I should take upon myself in case of false statements, according to Article 95 of the criminal law of the USSR.

Maj. Gen. Kazuma OTSUBO

Recipient of this acknowledgement

Assistant Prosecutor for the USSR  
at the International Military Tribunal  
Tokyo

Ivanof.